

## LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

**LANDMARK NAME:** William and Edna Bowles House  
**OWNER:** David H. Cummins  
**APPLICANT:** David H. Cummins  
**LOCATION:** 2 West Eleventh Place – West Eleventh Place  
Historic District  
**30-DAY HEARING NOTICE:** N/A

**AGENDA ITEM:** I.b  
**HPO FILE NO.:** 07L185  
**DATE ACCEPTED:** Jul-30-07  
**HAHC HEARING DATE:** Aug-22-07  
**PC HEARING DATE:** Aug-30-07

### SITE INFORMATION:

Lot 3, Block 4, W. 11<sup>th</sup> Place Re-Subdivision of Block 1 and 4 of the N. P. Turner Addition, City of Houston, Harris County, Texas. The building on the site is an historic two-story, wood-framed with brick veneer, single family residence.

**TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED:** Landmark Designation

### HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The William and Edna Bowles House is a contributing structure in the West Eleventh Place National Register and City of Houston Historic Districts. The house was constructed in 1923 in the Colonial Revival style and was a collaborative effort between the builder and the original owners William and Edna Bowles. Joseph W. Northrup, who was one of Houston's most respected architects of the time, designed the layout for the exclusive West Eleventh Place neighborhood as well as for three of the houses, and he created design guidelines to be followed by other architects and builders in West Eleventh Place. William Bowles was superintendent of the Texas Exploration Company and Edna Bowles was the sister of Robert Henderson, who lived at 5 West Eleventh Place. The Bowles House meets Criteria 1, 3, 4 and 6 for Landmark Designation, as well as being a contributing structure to the West Eleventh Place National Register and City of Houston Historic Districts.

### HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE:

The house at 2 West Eleventh Place was built for William V. Bowles (1888-1945) and his wife Edna in 1923. Bowles was the youngest child of William and Martha Bowles of Chickasaw County, Mississippi. According to the West Eleventh Place Historic District nomination, William Bowles' "father had come to Texas from Mississippi in the early oil boom at Spindletop." William Bowles eventually came to Houston via Beaumont, Texas. Although Beaumont was the epicenter of Texas oil drilling production, most of the oil companies were headquartered in Houston

William Bowles lived in Houston as early as 1920 when Houston city directories listed his address as 2606 Baldwin Street in the area now known as Midtown. Bowles' occupation was listed as Superintendent of the Texas Exploration Company. He is first listed as living at 2 West Eleventh Place in 1923. That same year, the other residents of West Eleventh Place included Willard C. Averill Jr, President of the Terminal Oil and Refining Company; Thomas W. Blake, President of the T. W. Blake Lumber Company, at 7 West Eleventh Place; and Robert Henderson at 5 West Eleventh Place, who was employed in the family-owned Henderson Cotton Company.

The residents of West Eleventh Place were representative of homeowners who lived in Houston's early 20<sup>th</sup> century upscale residential neighborhoods. The residents of this new enclave represented the trinity of southeast Texas industry at that time - oil, lumber, and cotton. The neighborhood – a one-block long cul-de-sac with one entrance from Bissonnet Street – was developed by Joseph W. Northrup in 1920-21 from Block 4 of the earlier N. P. Turner Addition platted in 1871.

Northrup had a close relationship with his clients who purchased homes in West Eleventh Place. Thomas W. Blake, a founding resident of West Eleventh Place, assembled the land for the new subdivision and was responsible for its re-plat. Northrup guided the physical layout of the neighborhood and also designed three of the six original houses at 4, 5, and 6 West Eleventh Place. Furthermore, Northrup helped craft design guidelines for the remaining three houses to be built so that they too would be in harmony with the neighborhood's master plan. Other architects who worked in the neighborhood included William Ward Watkin, who designed the home at 1 West Eleventh Place, and Einar Stube who designed the home at 7 West Eleventh Place.

Northrup's work can be seen elsewhere in the vicinity of West Eleventh Place. He worked for the architectural firm of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson, with fellow architect William Ward Watkin. Together they helped design the look for nearby Rice University. Northrup also designed the pedestal on which the famous mounted statue of Sam Houston rests in the traffic circle near the axis of Montrose Boulevard and South Main Street. In addition to residential and civic works, Northrup designed the First Evangelical Church campus at 1311 Holman Street and St. Mathew Lutheran Church at 5315 Main Street.

### **ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND RESTORATION HISTORY:**

The Bowles House was designed in the Colonial Revival style, a trademark of architect J. W. Northrup. The structure is a five-bay wide, with a single bay addition which is setback from the southeast side of the building. The house is two-stories in height and is of wood-frame construction with brick veneer. The house is characterized by its gable end roof and narrow eave overhangs. The house's "L" shaped plan is oriented with its main façade facing West Eleventh Place and the two-story L shaped wing facing Bissonnet. The Bowles House and the Hail House, directly across the street at 1 West Eleventh Place, form a visual boundary between the quiet enclave and nearby Bissonnet Street.

The house features evenly-spaced six-over-one-pane double-hung, wood-sash windows throughout. The solid wood panel front entry door is framed by sidelights and capped by a lunette transom sheltered beneath a shallow colonial style awning mounted flush with the facade. A shorter eight-over-eight-light wood sash window is centered on the second story façade over the entry. The north elevation, which faces Bissonnet, also features matching six-over-six-pane wood sash windows on the first and second floors and a multi-light Palladian type window in the gable end. A centered pair of multi-light French doors faces Bissonnet and is sheltered beneath a small cantilevered, hipped roof porch awning.

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

West Eleventh Place Historic District Nomination, 1997.

Fox, Stephen, Houston Architectural Guide, American Institute of Architects, 1990.

Houston City Directories 1920-1930.

# CITY OF HOUSTON

## Archaeological & Historical Commission

## Planning and Development Department

*The information and sources provided by the applicant for this application have been reviewed, verified, edited and supplemented with additional research and sources by Thomas McWhorter, Planning and Development Department, City of Houston.*

### APPROVAL CRITERIA FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION:

The HAHC and the Planning Commission, in making recommendations with respect to designation, and the City Council, in making a designation, shall consider one or more of the following criteria, as appropriate for the type of designation:

S	NA		S - satisfies	NA - not applicable
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(1) Whether the building, structure, object, site or area possesses character, interest or value as a visible reminder of the development, heritage, and cultural and ethnic diversity of the city, state, or nation (Sec. 33-224(a)(1);		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(2) Whether the building, structure, object, site or area is the location of a significant local, state or national event (Sec. 33-224(a)(2);		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(3) Whether the building, structure, object, site or area is identified with a person who, or group or event that, contributed significantly to the cultural or historical development of the city, state, or nation (Sec. 33-224(a)(3);		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(4) Whether the building or structure or the buildings or structures within the area exemplify a particular architectural style or building type important to the city (Sec. 33-224(a)(4);		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(5) Whether the building or structure or the buildings or structures within the area are the best remaining examples of an architectural style or building type in a neighborhood (Sec. 33-224(a)(5);		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(6) Whether the building, structure, object or site or the buildings, structures, objects or sites within the area are identified as the work of a person or group whose work has influenced the heritage of the city, state, or nation (Sec. 33-224(a)(6);		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(7) Whether specific evidence exists that unique archaeological resources are present (Sec. 33-224(a)(7);		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(8) Whether the building, structure, object or site has value as a significant element of community sentiment or public pride (Sec. 33-224(a)(8).		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(9) If less than 50 years old, or proposed historic district containing a majority of buildings, structures, or objects that are less than 50 years old, whether the building, structure, object, site, or area is of extraordinary importance to the city, state or nation for reasons not based on age (Sec. 33-224(b).		

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Houston Planning Commission accept the recommendation of the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission and recommend to City Council the Landmark Designation of the William and Edna Bowles House at 2 West Eleventh Place.

# CITY OF HOUSTON

Archaeological & Historical Commission

Planning and Development Department

SITE LOCATION MAP  
WILLIAM AND EDNA BOWLES HOUSE  
2 WEST ELEVENTH PLACE  
NOT TO SCALE

